



A zebra's Christmas story

Once upon a time, there was a zebra that lived in the plains of Eastern Africa.

He had a happy zebra childhood growing up with his family, doing typical zebra things. It was expected he would become the next leader of the pack and sire the next generation and so on. That's what smart and handsome young zebras did.

But he had other plans.

Make your words count

He wanted to bring the strength and beauty of his stripes to the world and for them to mean something. He wanted to help others gleefully proclaim their uniqueness. He wanted them to **dare to be**. He wanted to listen to their stories and tell the rest of the world about them. Because each one matters.

And so off he went, leaving the plains of East Africa behind.

Chart your own course

He traveled north by northwest, hitching a ride on a freight train that brought him to a port on the Mediterranean coast, crossing desert regions that were even hotter than his native land.

Once he arrived on the shore, he realized zebras don't walk on water, and they can't swim long distances either. He had a ways to go.

To write well, use all your senses

When he was growing up, he'd quickly figured out solutions to a problem came fastest when he bothered to take the time, not just to look, but **to see**, not just to hear, but **to listen**.

He followed a group of dockhands walking purposefully towards a pier. A huge crane had just positioned the last container on the biggest barge he'd ever seen. He looked at the crane, heard the tugboat's motors start to churn, and decided in a blink.

If it's been done, invent the extraordinary

He jumped on board and hid between the colored containers. "Who would think to look for a zebra here?" he laughed to himself.

And off he went to France.

When the freighter docked in Marseille, he jumped off the barge and into the sea. The water washed the heat of the trip off his back. To his surprise, he swam easily a few hundred yards, walking onto a pebbly beach as if it were the most natural thing in the world.

*Don't ask why, ask how:
the answer is in the big picture*

Word got out, and his arrival made headlines. He couldn't be sent back to the ordinary and mundane where everyone looked alike and sounded alike and spoke alike.

He moved quickly, making his way, this time north by northeast, following the scent of prairie grass he was beginning to miss. The plains turned to hillsides and into small mountains and finally into tall mountains. For the first time, his hoofs felt cool and his eyes could see for miles and miles and miles around.

It was Christmas, and he was on top of the world.

Hear
See
Dare
Aim high
Look wide
Show
Tell
Reach
Proclaim
Change perspective.

Stand out of the crowd.

A little creativity goes a long way.

*We wish you inspirational holidays
and a stripe-filled New Year!*

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